

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ASUNCI 03189 112036Z

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C O N F I D E N T I A L ASUNCION 3189

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PFOR, PA, PO, US

SUBJECT: PORTUGUESE DISSIDENTS SEEKING HELP FROM
PARAGUAY

1. PRESIDENT STROESSNER AND ARMY CHIEF OF STAFF GENERAL FRETES DAVALOS ON SEPARATE OCCASIONS DURING PAST TWO WEEKS HAVE RAISED WITH SENIOR US MILITARY OFFICERS AT THIS MISSION (MILGP COMMANDER AND DEFENSE ATTACHE) A REQUEST WHICH GOP HAS RECEIVED DIRECTLY FROM PORTUGUESE ANTI-COMMUNIST DISSIDENTS FOR ASSISTANCE. MOST RECENT APPROACH TO DEFENSE ATTACHE BY FRETES DAVALOS ON AUGUST 9-10 WAS FOR USG OPINION ON WHAT GOP'S RESPONSE SHOULD BE TO A REQUEST FROM SEVERAL UNNAMED PORTUGUESE OFFICERS CURRENTLY VISITING ASUNCION FOR LAND IN CHACO WHICH MIGHT BE USED FOR TRAINING AND/OR STORAGE OF MILITARY EQUIPMENT. ACCORDING TO FRETES DAVALOS, BRAZILIANS HAD RECOMMENDED GOP ACT FAVORABLY ON PORTUGUESE REQUEST BUT HE WANTED AN INDEPENDENT OPINION FROM US AS TO WHAT PARAGUAY'S RESPONSE SHOULD BE.

2. AFTER CONSULTING WITH THE AMBASSADOR DATT REVIEWED FOR FRETES DAVALOS GENERAL LINES OF US POLICY TOWARDS PORTUGAL (E.G., ONE OF WATCHFUL WAITING) AND SAID THAT
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PAGE 02 ASUNCI 03189 112036Z

PARAGUAY WOULD HAVE TO MAKE UP ITS OWN MIND WHAT TO DO

ABOUT REQUESTS SUCH AS THE ONE IT HAD UNDER CONSIDERATION.
GENERAL FRETES DAVLOS' REACTION TO THIS ADVICE WAS MOST
POSITIVE: HE SAID THAT HE INDEPENDENTLY CAME TO THE
CONCLUSION THAT PARAGUAY SHOULD DO NOTHING AND HE WOULD
SO RECOMMEND TO PRESIDENT STROESSNER.

3. IN VIEW OF HIGH LEVEL SOURCE OF THIS INQUIRY AND
LONGEVITY (OVER TWO WEEKS) OF PARAGUAY'S CURRENT
INTEREST, IF DEPT HAS ANY FURTHER SPECIFIC ADVICE WHICH
WE COULD USEFULLY PASS TO GOP, EMBASSY WILL BE GLAD TO
PASS IT ALONG.
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